The terms nursing home and assisted living facility are often used interchangeably. While both are part of the continuum of long term care, they are very different in the level of care required and the services delivered to residents. Nursing homes provide 24/7 care, complementing ALF and community-based long term care services by acting as a safety net when an individual’s frailty progresses to the point that comprehensive care is needed. The federal and state laws and regulations governing the two levels of care are also very different.

### Nursing Homes

**Demographics**
- 680 Nursing Homes in Florida.
- Approximately 72,000 residents.
- 80% of residents rely on Medicaid or Medicare to cover their care needs.

**Level of Care**
- **Resident makeup:** Frail elders and individuals with disabilities who need complex medical care
- **Nursing supervision:** 24 hours a day/7 days a week.
- **Assistance with daily activities:** The average resident requires constant care, including assistance with 4 activities of daily living - ex. feeding, bathing, toileting, taking medication, dressing, grooming, etc. Residents may also receive physical, occupational and other rehabilitative therapies following an accident or illness.
- **Alzheimer’s or related dementias:** Represents 60% of nursing home residents.

**Administrator Education**
- A baccalaureate degree, with a major in health care administration, and a completed university internship or a 1,000 hour Administrator In Training Program; or
- A baccalaureate degree and a completed 2,000 hour Administrator In Training Program.
- Must pass the National Association of Boards of Examiners of Nursing Home Administrators Exam.

**Regulatory Environment**
- **Inspections:** Annual
- **Regulatory Agencies:** The Agency for Health Care Administration conducts these surveys for Florida and on behalf of the Federal government (Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services).
- **Survey Team:** Composed of nurses, dieticians, social workers, life safety experts and physician consultants.
- **Additional Regulatory Agencies:** The LTC Ombudsman Program, Adult Protective Services, DOH, Fire Marshall and the AG’s Medicaid Fraud Office can, at any time, investigate concerns within a facility.
- **Minimum Staffing Requirements:** for both nursing staff and certified nursing assistants.

### Assisted Living Facilities

**Demographics**
- Approximately 3,042 licensed ALFs in Florida.
- Approximately 85,000 residents.
- ALF residents primarily rely on private funds to cover their care needs, but some are eligible for Medicaid waiver services.
- Fifty (50) percent of ALFs offer some form of Medicaid waiver service through Aging/Disabled Adults, Assisted Living Waiver, Assisted Care Services or Developmental Disabilities Waivers.

**Level of Care**
- **Resident makeup:** Assisted living is an intermediate level of care, appropriate for individuals who want greater independence and do not require intense or constant medical attention.
- **Nursing supervision:** NO 24-hour nursing supervision in standard ALFs; nursing services limited to administering medication, taking vital signs, observing, reporting to physician in a standard ALF.
- **Assistance with daily activities:** ALF residents must be able to perform their own activities of daily living independently or with limited supervision or assistance. ALFs provide a combination of housing, personal care services, and health care designed to respond to individuals in a way that promotes maximum independence.
- **Alzheimer’s or related dementia:** Many ALFs provide these services with individuals often housed in a special wing with additional security and cueing devices.
- **Licensure types:** All ALFs must hold at least a Standard license; some ALFs offering additional services obtain a specialty license (Limited Nursing Services, Limited Mental Health, Extended Congregate Care)

**Administrator Education**
- A high school diploma or GED.
- Core Training, state exam and ongoing continuing education.
- Not licensed or regulated by a board.

**Regulatory Environment**
- **Inspections:** Every 2 Years
- **Agencies:** The Agency for Health Care Administration conducts these surveys for the State of Florida.
- **Surveyor:** 1-2 Agency staff for standard ALFs, depending on the number of beds.
- **Additional Regulatory Agencies:** The LTC Ombudsman Program, Adult Protective Services, DOH, Fire Marshall and the AG’s Medicaid Fraud Office can, at any time, investigate concerns within a facility.